



744 La Guardia Street, Building A, Salinas, CA 93905

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## June 18, 2020– MEETING MINUTES—Approved July 23, 2020

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, June 18, 2020, 10:20 A.M. – 12:20 P.M.

Directors Present: B. Jefferson, R. King, J. Doud, B. Lipe, B. Plemmons, J. Clarke

Directors Absent: J. Gularte

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Barker (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), J. Tuitele-Lewis (RCDMC), E. Boyland (NRCS), M. Ritter

Recorders: M. Barker, P. Robins

*Because of shelter-in-place orders for the COVID-19 outbreak, the meeting was held by Zoom conference.*

Closed session : Executive Director annual performance review.

Open Session: Called to Order at 10:40 am

Report Out from Closed Session: Director King expressed that Executive Director performance review was positive overall. Robins continues to have growing responsibilities and was encouraged to continue to delegate any tasks he can to lighten his workload. He received accolades overall for the delegation that he has done thus far. An associated 2.5% salary increase for Robins was approved by the Board to be effective July 1.

Public Comment: None.

### Consent Items

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the May 28, 2020 Regular Board Meeting*
- *Accept Staff Activities Report for May 2020.*

Director Lipe moved to approve all Consent Items. Director Plemmons seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

### Reports

*Executive Director Report*: Robins said that an office use plan has been drafted for on-going shelter-in-place procedures. RCDMC employees continue to work from home for the most part with staff meeting with clients in the field as needed. He noted the Soil Scientist's concern that she has not been able to meet with as many Latino ag growers due to their financial difficulties related to the COVID situation. Robins also shared that he has completed the second session of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training via Zoom.

*NRCS Report*: District Conservation Erika Boyland reported that the USDA has established a three-phase approach for re-opening. However, she shared that Phase 1 requirements for re-opening the Salinas office have not yet been met because of the rising trend of new COVID cases in Monterey County. Therefore, NRCS is still in the "gating" or waiting period for the Phase 1 re-opening. All employees should continue to wear masks at all times while in the office. NRCS is currently looking to continue to stagger staff office use, likely until a vaccine is approved. Boyland also shared that the NRCS batch deadline is June 26<sup>th</sup>.

*Directors' Updates:* none.

Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.

*Monthly Financial Statements:* M. Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending June 18, 2020. The accrual account balance on June 18, 2020 was \$222,879.04 with \$34,958.03 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury accounts (taking into account checks to be signed at the meeting), \$301,446 in liabilities, and \$489,366.67 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$212,415.77 on May 28, 2020.

*Expenses:* Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on June 18, including bi-weekly salary through June 7, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of May and June, totaling \$40,418.81.

Director Lipe moved to approve the June financial statements and the May and June expenses as presented. Director Clarke seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*Maternity Leave policy update to RCDMC Personnel Policy:* Robins discussed potential changes to the RCDMC maternity leave policy (i.e. Pregnancy Disability Leave). The employee's position is protected for up to 4 months under the current policy. Robins said that he wanted to ensure that health insurance would also be maintained for the maternity leave period, which is not explicit in the RCD's current personnel policy. He and Errea will revise text in the policy so that health coverage during maternity leave is explicitly stated and will present the revision to the Board for consideration at a future board meeting.

*2020-21 Annual Workplan:* Robins shared the updated 2020-21 Annual Workplan with the board. Key updates (in bullets below) include additions to the following 2017-2022 goals:

- 1) **An established Stream Management Plan exists for the Salinas River**
  - Treat 100 acres of arundo as mitigation and manage 152 acres of secondary channels (mitigation sites and 26 channels/management areas) under the Stream Maintenance Program on the Salinas River in summer and fall 2020
- 2) **Monterey County farmers and landowners work with the RCD to reduce water use, reduce erosion, and manage invasive vegetation**
  - Facilitate approximately 150 acres of fuels reduction and forest health work to be conducted by the USFS Monterey Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest, California State Parks, El Sur Ranch and Pico Blanco Boy Scout Camp.
  - Support Elkhorn Slough Foundation Eucalyptus removal planning for Elkhorn Slough watershed through IWRP.
  - Six fire/forest health workshops held or supported by RCDMC: three related to prescribed fire, two forest health outreach/training and one chipping demo/outreach event.
- 3) **Monterey County growers are known as proactive, engaged, and efficient.**
  - No modifications.
- 4) **Members of the community understand conservation and the RCD and are inspired to help achieve our goals.**
  - Revise and incorporate tagline into RCD communications
  - Develop and implement 52-week outreach content dissemination plan with local and regional partners

- *Establish at least one partnership for a project or proposal with one urban entity or with one coastal resource non-profit working in the county.*
  - *Promote other entities' participation via Zoom in Board Meetings through targeted announcements for meetings by subject matter in addition to regular public postings.*
  - *Communicate efforts to improve equity, diversity and inclusion in RCD planning, education and technical assistance.*
- 5) The RCD has robust and diverse sources of revenue.**
- No modifications.
- 6) The RCD Board of Directors is committed, effective & engaged.**
- *Incorporate equity, diversity & inclusion considerations in objectives development of Strategic Plan update.*
- 7) All Monterey County students see the importance of agriculture in our county and understand the potential for ag careers.**
- No modifications

Director Lipe moved to approve the 2021 Annual Workplan as presented. Director Plemmons seconded and all motioned to approve.

*2020-21 Annual Budget:* Robins presented the 2020-21 Annual Budget to the Board. The Finance Committee reviewed this draft of the budget prior to the meeting. The budget for fiscal year 2020-21 will be a balanced budget of just under \$3.5 Million, meaning expenditures match the anticipated income. Expenses are primarily for Contract Services (\$2.5M) for the Arundo Control Program and Fire Fuels Program. Personnel costs (\$801K) will be slightly less than last year. Robins shared that the County Auditor responded yesterday that the line of credit will be scheduled for review by the Board of Supervisors for approval at the June 30th or July 7th Board of Supervisors meeting.

Director Plemmons motioned approve the 2020-21 Annual Budget as presented. Director Clarke seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*Review of New or Revised Independent Contractor Agreements:* none.

#### New Business

#### Directors/ Staff

*Proposed RCDMC outreach regarding current events:* Robins shared an RCD anti-racism statement that was initiated by staff, discussed with the Executive Committee, and drafted based on their input. The statement condemns racist violence and unfair treatment towards Indigenous and other People of Color and outlines the RCD's commitment to counter these problems in the context of the RCD's Mission and work. The statement, if approved, would be circulated through the RCD's mailing list, facebook page and website. Robins noted that part of the RCD's strength is being non-partisan, and that being anti-racist is not a political issue but rather an ethical issue that we are already addressing through our work with the broader community.

Director Jefferson expressed his concern that posting a statement could come back to hurt the organization because of the polarized views of some community members. Director Lipe expressed a concern that this statement as written might be too political to release, and said that it should be understood that all members of the community should already believe in the fair treatment for all people as it is an ethical issue. The objective is honorable to want to make sure that all people are treated equally. Members of the Board generally discussed risks that statement might turn off certain members of our community, while acknowledging their general

support of the proposed statement. Director Clarke shared that she is on another board that recently released a statement and they received one polarized response, but overall, the response was positive. Ultimately, the Board agreed that there was nothing objectionable in the statement and stood behind the overall message. Robins shared that RCDMC’s goal is to create a model of resource conservation and to be an example of how communities can work together.

Most board members supported moving the third paragraph to the top of the document because it leads the statement with the actions that the RCD is committed to and contextualizes the overall anti-racist statement more appropriately.

A straw vote was taken amongst the Board Members without a formal motion. Board members agreed to releasing the statement after revisions to the document were made (i.e. re-ordering the third paragraph). Director Lipe offered to help edit the final draft and provide feedback.

*BBQ Outreach Planning:* Robins asked the Board for feedback about if or how to hold the postponed spring BBQ this fall. Options include postponing the BBQ beyond October, holding the event at the Rodeo Room or at an outside venue, hosting an online auction, or doing a drive-thru BBQ. The Salinas Rodeo might still be held this year which limits the dates that the BBQ can be held at the Salinas Rodeo Room in October. The ladies trail ride has been rescheduled to October 23-25. The start of duck season has also been postponed to the very end of October. Robins affirmed that he would meet with an ad hoc committee in early July in order to return with a proposal for board consideration at the July meeting.

*Staff presentation about Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) Project with UC Cooperative Extension—*Jamie Tuitele-Lewis, Forest Health Coordinator presented his collaboration to support development of a Monterey and San Benito counties Prescribed Burn Association with Devii Rao from UCCE. At its core will be a group of local landowners who want to do active vegetation management burns on their properties, trainings, and a designated ‘Burn Boss’ for the group. A virtual workshop will be held on July 7<sup>th</sup>. Anyone interested in joining the Prescribed Burn Association can contact Tuitele-Lewis.

Announcements

Directors/ Robins

None to report.

12:21 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting:

Date: Thursday, July 23, 10am  
Location: Meeting will be held by teleconference



8/26/2020

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Minutes approved